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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
U. S. Department of Agriculture
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A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

FEB 14 '79

Issue #19
September 5, 1975

PRESIDENT PROPOSES TO LIMIT PAY RAISE TO 5%.....The Congress has 30 days in which to act. Either the House or Senate may adopt a resolution disapproving the President's proposal. If that occurs, the pay raise will be 8.66%. Sen. Metcalf (D-Mont.) has introduced S. Res. 239 and Rep. Harris (D-Va.) has introduced H. Res. 688, both of which disapprove the proposed 5% limitation.

GRAIN INVESTIGATIONS YIELD INDICTMENT IN OREGON.....On August 28, the OI/U.S. Attorney grain investigations in Oregon resulted in a indictment against a ship's crewmember for attempting to bribe a State grain inspector. (Contact: Rod Elam, OI, ext. 76979)

ANNUAL SEMINAR OF ASSOCIATION OF FEDERAL INVESTIGATORS TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 9-11.....It will be at the International Inn. Topics include: A Look at Computer Fraud; White Collar Crime; Federal Rules of Evidence; Recent Court Decisions Affecting Investigators; and Pending Legislation Affecting the Federal Investigator. (Contact: Rod Elam, OI, ext. 76979)

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE A SUCCESS.....Favorable reports have been received concerning the conference. There were 104 staff personnel and 55 guests in attendance. Both Washington, D.C. and field personnel participated.

20 FmHA EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE IN INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.....This will be held at American University and will start in September, 1975. The purpose of the Institute is to strengthen financial management in the public sector by building professional competency in the fields of public financial management, with considerable emphasis on applying the acquired knowledge and skills in actual agency operating problems. For information on this program, contact Prof. Raymond Einhorn at American University, 686-2107, or Dr. Mortimer Dittenhofer, Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP), 376-5415. (Source: Joint Financial Management Improvement Program News Bulletin, July, 1975.)

FmHA DESIGNS DIRECT CHECK ISSUANCE SYSTEM FOR LOAN PROGRAMS.....This was done in cooperation with JFMIP, GSA, and the Department of the Treasury. The new system operates on the principle that interest costs would be calculated only on the amounts of funds needed by borrowers from U.S. Treasury. Operationally, the Treasury Department will issue checks directly to FmHA borrowers from its Kansas City Regional Disbursing Office in Kansas on a 24-hour turnaround service. The new system

became operational for most FmHA loan program on August 1; it will be totally operational for all FmHA programs beginning November 1, 1975. It is expected that the revised system will result in estimated interest savings to the Government and FmHA borrowers of \$40 million per year. (Source: Joint Financial Management Improvement Program News Bulletin, July, 1975.)

FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AWARDS PROGRAM ESTABLISHED FOR FAS EMPLOYEES...
Cash awards of \$300 to \$500 may be offered as an incentive to employees to develop foreign language skills which are vital in effectively representing USDA abroad. USDA is the first Federal Agency not covered by the Foreign Service Act to develop such a program. (Contact: Mae Paulsen, OP, ext. 75618)

WHAT YOU MAY OR MAY NOT DO AS A FEDERAL EXECUTIVE.....

- ... You may join any labor organization, but as management officials and supervisors, you may not act as representatives or participate in the management of any such organization.
- ... You may register and vote in any election.
- ... You may not take an active part in political management or in a political campaign, except as permitted by law or regulation.
- ... You may not engage in any outside employment or other outside activity not compatible with the full and proper discharge of the duties and responsibilities of your Government employment, whether on your own behalf, or for private individuals, firms, companies, institutions or State or local governments.
- ... You as a public official can not employ relatives in your agency or in an agency over which you exercise jurisdiction or control.

SOME INFORMATION ON THE NEW WHITE HOUSE FELLOW..... Thomas J. Kline, Jr. received a B.S. from the University of Tennessee and an M.S. from the University of Missouri, in industrial engineering. He has served in the Army. Prior to joining USDA as the Fellow, he was Materials Manager for Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Barceloneta, Puerto Rico.

GSA IMPLEMENTS NEW PROCESS TO ESTABLISH STANDARD LEVEL USER CHARGE RATES....
Rather than on a "commercial equivalent" basis, rates in FY 1977 will be based on the appraisal value of the building or space. Using qualified appraisers, a Fair Annual Rental (FAR) appraisal will be made for all locations prior to April 1976. USDA may be asked to assist with appraisals in the rural areas. This new process should eliminate many apparent inequities in the existing market survey procedure. (Contact: Bill Roth, 00, ext. 75225)

PRINTING PLANT

UNITS
PRODUCED



In Fiscal Year 1974, the plant processed 15,357 jobs, using 56,205 plates to print 239.5 million pages. In FY-1975, the number of jobs increased to 16,274 using 83,241 plates, up (48 percent). to produce 212.7 million pages, down (13 percent). The decrease in pages produced indicates agencies are controlling costs by requesting shorter runs.

(Contact: John Keaney, 00, ext. 73937)

COMPTROLLER GENERAL EASES RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF COMMERCIAL FORMS AND PROCEDURES FOR SMALL SHIPMENTS.....The price limitation on the use of commercial forms and procedures has been raised from \$25 per shipment to \$100 per shipment. Imprest funds may be used. Transportation charges must be billed by and paid to the origin carrier or forwarder only. Administrative determinations that the use of commercial forms and procedures are more economical are no longer required. However, billing procedures must still be worked out with the carrier (B-163758, August 14, 1975). AGPMR 104-40.5004-5 will be amended to reflect the new ruling. (Contact: Kim Boyer, 00, ext. 77557)

FARM DEFINITION IS CHANGED.....To better reflect today's agriculture, the official definition of a farm is being changed. The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of the Census will now define a farm as "any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products is sold or would normally be sold during a year." Under the old definition used since the late 1950's, a farm was any place under 10 acres with annual sales of \$250 or more of agricultural goods, or any place or 10 or more acres selling \$50 or more. The new definition will result in a decreased number of farms. The extent of the decrease will be known following review of the 1974 Census of Agriculture. (Contact: D. Mayes, ERS, ext. 74893)

MANAGEMENT COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS.....

Payroll Schedule to Remain "As Is".....At a recent Council meeting, comments were requested on a proposal concerning advancing the payroll schedule date. The majority of the comments received indicated that it was preferred to continue the present schedule. The reason most frequently offered was the concern that there would be fewer people paid on the advanced payday and that it would result in employee discontent. This proposal, therefore, has been dropped for the present. If certain agencies were to accelerate their submission of Time and Attendance Reports (T&A's) to NFC, the schedule could be advanced without any decrease in the number of people paid on the primary schedule. Agencies are urged again to work to improve the submission of T&A's to NFC. (Contact: Dennis Boyd, NFC)

At the September 4 Council meeting, APHIS, AMS, and FNS discussed their experience with Assessment Centers. Candid presentations were made of the advantages and problems which had been experienced. APHIS uses the Centers for developmental purposes; AMS, to determine career potential; and FNS, for executive selection.